THE CASE OF THE OPPOSITION

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Impartially Stated.

He that has Ears to hear, let Him hear!

By a GENTLEMAN of the *Inner-Temple.*

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THE

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THERE is a ſingle Point in which all Parties, how much ſoever they differ about other Things, unanimouſly agree; and it is this, that nothing can be of more dangerous Conſequence at this critical Juncture, to this Nation, than *the continuing of our Diviſions*. Indeed there requires no great Penetration to diſcern this, ſince every body knows and confeſſes, that our Debts, our Taxes, and in reality every other Evil, the Weight of which we feel, and of the Burthen of which we complain, have been all brought upon us by our Diviſions. It cannot therefore but be an acceptable Thing to ſtate the Caſe truly, and to ſhew the Grounds of our preſent Diviſions, that every honeſt Man may know which Side to chuſe, and by going over to that Side, preponderate the *Scale* of Juſtice and Equity, ſince

what *Solon* made a Law in *Athens*, will remain a true political Maxim amongſt every free People; that in Debates which regard the Conſtitution, every Man ought to take either the one Side or the other. In Matters of ſmall Moment, we may be indifferent; but here, where both Parties confeſs our ALL is at Stake, we are bound to make our Choice. To be *Lukewarm* in the *Cauſe* of our *Country*, is to be *againſt* it.

It is now ſomewhat more than twenty Years, that a certain Party hath ſubſiſted amongſt us, under the Title of *the Oppoſition*; they have at certain Times been compoſed of very different People, and conſequently have been conſidered in different Lights; but the proper Characteriſtic of the Party, and that from which it derives it's Name, is the *Oppoſing* of *Power*, or endeavouring to circumſcribe in Parliament the Grants of Money and Extention of Authority, which have from Time to Time been demanded by ſeveral Adminiſtrations. Now, if this Scheme of Oppoſition has been right with Regard to the Intereſt of the Nation, that is to ſay, if the People of *Great-Britain* would have been Gainers, by putting in Practice what the Perſons from Time to Time concerned in this Oppoſition propos'd, then, without Queſtion, the Deſign of the Oppoſition is *right* upon the whole, though at particular Times, and by particular Perſons, it might be proſecuted on *wrong Motives*.

It is neceſſary to make this Diſtinction between the Scheme ſupported by the Party, who have formed the Oppoſition for ſo many Years, and the private Views of particular Perſons, who have at certain Times engaged therein, becauſe the common Topick

Topick of Reproach into which the Writers on the Side of Power unanimouſly run, is this; that Men have often contradicted themſelves, and notwithſtanding the Language they have made Uſe of when *out*, have avowed quite oppoſite Doctrines when *in*. Now the plain meaning of this, is no more than that particular Perſons have had great Failings, and have in *different Situations*, contended with equal Vehemence for *different Things*. That this may, and ought to affect *them* I do not deny; but certainly their Behaviour could no way affect *Things* themſelves. If the Demands of the Adminiſtration for ſo many Years paſt, were juſt and reaſonable, then all *Oppoſition* was *unjuſt* and *unreaſonable* from whatever Quarter it came; and on the other Hand, if the propoſing a ſtrict Examination into publick Affairs, a narrow Inſpection of all the Pretences on which either Money or Power were demanded by Men at the Helm, was with reſpect to the Intereſt of this Nation *fit* and *right*, then the *Oppoſition* was always a *good Thing*, though poſſibly all who were concerned in it might not be *good Men*.

Such as have endeavoured to ſet the Conduct of thoſe in the Oppoſition conſtantly in a *bad Light*, have found themſelves under a Neceſſity of *miſrepreſenting* the Thing, and therefore the firſt Step to be taken in order to give ſuch as are impartial a juſt inſight into this Matter, is to render theſe Miſrepreſentations *manifeſt*, which is the Deſign of this Paper. *Oppoſition* in the Stile of ſome People, is a Term Synonimous with *Diſaffection*, and great Pains has been taken to make the World believe, that none ever *oppoſe* a Government, who *wiſh well*

to it. But this is certainly begging the Queſtion, and by proving *too much*, proves *nothing*. If we conſider the Reaſon of the Thing, and take for our Guide a Maxim in which all Parties at preſent agree, *viz. That the* End *of* Government *is the Good of the* Subject, then it will appear very poſſible for ſuch as *mean* the Government *well*, to *oppoſe* ſuch as are in the *Adminiſtration* of it, unleſs it can be ſhewn, that Men veſted with Power, have never aimed at *violating* their *Truſt*, or that according to the Principles of our Conſtitution, *ſuch* as have the *executive Part* of the Government in their *Hands*, are the *only fit Judges* how they ought to uſe it. But as theſe are Notions abſolutely repugnant to Liberty and Common Senſe, ſo they have been long ago exploded; and therefore as I ſaid before, all Circumſtances taken in, it muſt be allowed that *Oppoſition* is not *malum in ſe*, or a direct and concluſive Proof of *Diſaffection*, but quite the contrary.

Experience has verified this in all Reigns, and if we go no higher than the Reſtauration, it will be no hard Task to prove, that the *beſt Friends* of every Government, have at certain Times found themſelves under a Neceſſity of *oppoſing it*. Every Body knows that the *Cavaliers* in the Reign of King *Charles* II. were againſt the Earl of *Clarendon*'s Adminiſtration, and yet nobody ever imagined that they were *Enemies* to that King, or that they intended by their Conduct in this Point, any *Prejudice*, either to *his* Majeſty's *Perſon* or *Government*. The Earl of *Clarendon* was certainly a very great, and a very deſerving Man; but he was likewiſe a very over-bearing, and a very opiniative Miniſter. I do not pretend to enter into the Merits

Merits of that Oppoſition; it might be *right* in ſome Reſpects, and *wrong* in others: I mention it only to prove, that the beſt Friends to a *Prince* may think themſelves obliged even by their being ſo, to oppoſe his *Miniſters*. The *Cavaliers* in the ſame Reign, acted the ſame Part with reſpect to another Miniſtry, ſtiled the *Cabal*, and from the very ſame Motives. In the ſucceeding Reign, ſuch as wiſhed the King *well*, and *ſuffer'd* afterwards for their *Affection* to him, *oppos'd* his Meaſures with the greateſt Firmneſs, and never thought themſelves, nor have been thought by Poſterity the *worſe Subjects*, but the *better* upon that Account. They foreſaw that the *Steps* the *King* and his *Miniſters* were taking, would prove *fatal* to the *Nation* and to *him*, and therefore they did all that lay in their Power to prevent their taking *Effect*; but they did this in a *legal* Way, either by an *Oppoſition* in *Parliament*, or by dutifully expreſſing their Sentiments in Petitions to his Majeſty, when no Parliament was ſubſiſting; and though they were *blam'd* and *perſecuted* for this, at the Time they did it, yet their *Conduct* was juſtified by the *Event*.

After the Revolution, when the Nation was effectually cured of ſome political Prejudices, equally dangerous to Prince and People, there frequently appeared a *Spirit* of the ſame Kind among the *beſt Friends* to the Government, as it was then eſtabliſhed. They remember'd what Meaſures were thought oppreſſive and unjuſt in *former Reigns*, and they oppoſed them in this. Mr. *Trenchard*, who wrote the *Hiſtory of ſtanding Armies*, was undoubtedly as true a Friend to the Revolution, and as deſirous of ſupporting King *William*'s Government, as any Man in the Nation

Nation, and yet he thought himſelf at Liberty to croſs as far as lay in his Power, the *Deſigns* of *ſome* of that King's *Miniſters*, and to expreſs as great a Concern for what he took to be the *true Intereſt* of his *Country*, as if the *Revolution*, in which he heartily concurr'd, had never happen'd. It muſt be confeſſed, and great Advantages have been taken from it, that there were at that Time Abundance of People who *join'd* in *oppoſing* the Government, becauſe they were *diſaffected* to it; but this bad Deſign of theirs could not operate on ſuch Meaſures as were *right* in themſelves; but they remain'd ſtill *right*, though theſe People maintained them to be ſo from *wrong Motives*. Without Queſtion, the oppoſing *ſtanding Armies*; Increaſe of *publick Debts*, and making *ſecret* and *ſuſpicious Treaties* with foreign Powers, were Acts very laudable in themſelves, and not at all the leſs ſo becauſe *ill Men* concurred in them. We live at ſuch a Diſtance of Time as enables us to ſee that in theſe Points they thought *juſtly* and reaſon'd *right*. The Things they attempted to prevent, have had very fatal Conſequences, and therefore it had been happy for the Nation if they had been prevented. To ſay that all who were embark'd in this Oppoſition were *Patriots*, would be certainly *falſe*; but then it would be as *falſe* to aſſert, that *none* were engaged in that Oppoſition but *Jacobites*. There will be honeſt Men and bad Men, ſincere and inſincere, of all Parties; but the true Way to judge of the Merit of any Party, is to conſider its *Principles*.

In Queen *ANNE*'s Time, there were ſeveral *Oppoſitions*, and theſe carried on with great Heat and Paſſion; and yet ſuch as were concerned in them, inſiſted

inſiſted, and many of them I believe with Juſtice, that none *wiſhed better* to the Queen and her Government, than they did. In ſhort, if we ſhould pretend to take it for granted, that all ſuch as have oppoſed the Adminiſtration were at leaſt *concealed Enemies* to the *Government* under which they lived, we muſt run into a very groſs Miſtake, ſince none ſhewed greater Fidelity to the Crown at that Time, than ſuch as acted againſt its *Miniſters*. To ſum up all, as no ſet of Men amongſt us have ſcrupled to oppoſe at ſome time or other the Adminiſtrations under which they lived; this is a convincing Argument, that all Parties have thought it lawful, juſt, and expedient, no way derogatory to their Duty, no ſort of Blemiſh to their Loyalty, and therefore we ought in this Reſpect, to prefer their concurring Teſtimonies to the warm Declamations of prejudic'd Perſons, who would have us believe, that *Spite* appears in no Dreſs, more commonly than in that of *publick Spirit*. If therefore we muſt condemn *all Parties*, if we condemn *Oppoſition* in general, it is better to acquit *all*, and to confeſs that *Oppoſition*, as well as *Attachment*, is govern'd by Circumſtances, and that as it is not impoſſible Men may *betray* a Government they *ſerve*, ſo on the other Hand, it is not improbable that *Zeal* for the *publick Service* may induce Men to *oppoſe* the Meaſures of ſuch as are intruſted with the *Management* of *publick Affairs*.

From what has been ſaid, it clearly and evidently appears, that there can be nothing more groundleſs than thoſe Inſinuations which we ſo frequently hear thrown out, as if Oppoſition could proceed from nothing elſe but a *Diſlike* to the *Prince* upon

upon the *Throne*: whereas, generally ſpeaking, it may with much greater Propriety be referred to a *high Concern* for *his Safety*. Beſides, according to our Conſtitution, and as we ought always to be conſider'd, as a *free People*, Regard to the Nation, is Loyalty to the King; for ſuch as pretend to make any Difference between *his* Intereſts, and thoſe of his *Subjects*, may be his *Minions*, but can never poſſibly be his *Friends*. Such Perſons for their own Intereſt may *miſlead* him; but it does by no means follow, that becauſe they *deceive* him, it becomes the Part of every *good Subject* to ſhut his Eyes; it having been long ago determined here, that Kings are to be conſider'd in their *political Capacity*, in which as the Law ſuppoſes they *do no wrong*; ſo it muſt be underſtood, not to lay the People under any Neceſſity *of ſuffering Wrong*. Theſe are Maxims that may be gathered from the *unrepealable* Parts of our *Conſtitution*, ſuch as the *Bill* of *Rights*, and therefore in adhering to theſe it cannot, it ought not to be ſurmiſed, that Men depart from their *Duty*, ſince that would imply a Diſtinction between *Loyalty*, and the *Love* of *one's Country*, which can never happen under a *limited Monarchy*. The plain Meaning of the Term, being this, that the *Power* of the *Sovereign* is reſtrained by thoſe *Laws* which have been thought neceſſary for the *common Benefit* of his *People*.

If we carry theſe Speculations a little farther, we ſhall ſoon meet with inconteſtable Proofs of their being *juſt* and *right*. The Happineſs of a Prince can conſiſt in only theſe two Points, being *eaſy* at *Home*, and *reſpected Abroad*. Now nothing can be clearer than that an *impoveriſh'd*, *corrupted* and

and *vicious* People muſt render their Monarch *uneaſy*, becauſe they can neither *ſupport* his *Dignity* in a proper Manner, nor can he rely upon their *Fidelity*; and as plain it is, that a King in ſuch Circumſtance *at Home*, can never be conſidered as a *uſeful Ally*, or a *formidable Enemy* by his *Neighbours*. Whatever therefore contributes to the *reducing* any Nation into *ſuch* a *Condition*, muſt contribute at the ſame time to the *Weakening* the *Authority* of the *Prince*. Forms and Appearances may poſſibly be preſerved for a little while; but Time and Accidents will inevitably betray the *true State* of *Things* at laſt, and therefore the *oppoſing* ſuch *Meaſures* as have a Tendency to exhauſting the Wealth, breaking the Spirits, or corrupting the Manners of a whole Nation, is doing the *higheſt Service* to the *Sovereign*; however, *he* or *his Miniſters* may conceive it, and ſuch as purſue this Track, will ſooner or later be known for his *beſt* and *trueſt Friend*, however they may be belied or miſrepreſented by *Court-Flatterers*, who have been always too frequent, and in too great Favour with *ſuch Kings* as have given the Reins to their Paſſions, and endeavoured rather to gratify their own Inclinations, than to conſult the *Intereſt* of *themſelves* and their *Poſterity*, which however, is a *Duty* incumbent upon *them*, as well as *other Men*.

Theſe Things being premiſed, we ſhall next proceed to give a ſhort Account of the *Riſe* and *Progreſs* of the *preſent Oppoſition*. After the Affair of the *South-Sea*, abundance of Country Gentlemen who had no other *Buſineſs* in Parliament than to *ſerve* their *Conſtituents*, began to have their Heads full of melancholy Apprehenſions, when they ſaw

what a *Turn* that Affair took, and how the *Juſtice* of the *Nation* was eluded. They were ſurprized to ſee the Eaſe with which Men *united*, to ſerve their *own* Intereſts, who but a little while before, had *torn* each other's *Characters*, and expreſs'd a Deſire of *tearing* one another's *Perſons* in *Pieces*. They thought it was a ſtrange Time for ſuch as had put themſelves at the *Head* of the *Patriots*, to accept of *Places*, and began to have little Hopes of reaching the *Criminals*, when they ſaw the *Patrons* of thoſe *Criminals* become both their *Proſecutors* and their *Judges*. The Manner of Mr. *Knight*'s going off, alarmed them *then* as much as his coming home ought to ſurprize us *now*. In ſhort, they ſaw through, and deſpiſed this *Juggling*, and from that Time to this, have had a ſtrong *Averſion* to SCREENS.

Theſe Reflections led them to ſuſpect, that *publick Affairs* were not like to be managed with the *utmoſt Probity*, while in *certain Hands*. This induced them to be very aſſiduous in examing the annual *Propoſals* to *Parliament* for granting *Money*, increaſing the Power of *miniſterial Officers*, and approving ſuch *Treaties* as were made with foreign Princes. They knew the Nation laboured under a *heavy Load* of *Debts* and *Taxes*, and they were willing, if they had been able, to have paid off Part of the one, or to have taken ſomewhat from the other; but in this they hardly ever prevailed. They expreſſed a great Apprehenſion of *penal Laws*, becauſe they ſaw that by an Extenſion of the *Exciſe*, the Tools of every Miniſtry would be the Maſters of the Secrets, and conſequently of the Credit of all the trading Part of the Nation. They grew

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the more jealous of theſe Laws, when they perceiv'd, that they were very negligently executed, becauſe this very plainly ſhewed they were procured for *other Purpoſes*, than thoſe which were *pretended*, ſince otherwiſe, ſuch as preſs'd the *paſſing*, would have look'd with equal Care to their *Execution*. They were not a little ſuſpicious, that the new Trade of *Negotiating* would be far from proving Advantagious to the *Nation*, and they were very much confirm'd in this Notion, when they ſaw *ſome Men* made Choice of for Miniſters abroad, who could not ſo much as *make a Bow*; and others who had not *Capacity* enough to write a *common Letter*. Their Fears increaſed, when they found us medling in *every Thing*, and they were equally Soliicitous about the *Honour* and *Safety* of the *Kingdom*, while its moſt important Affairs were intruſted to ſuch a *Set* of *ſtrange Politicians*. Such was the *Riſe* of *this Oppoſition*, and ſuch the *Motives* that engaged the *Gentlemen* who originally embarked therein, many of whom are ſtill living, to reſolve to exert themſelves with Zeal and Diligence in the *Service* of their *Country*, without much Regard to their *croſſing* the *Deſigns* of thoſe by whom they thought ſhe was very *ill ſerved*.

At firſt ſetting out, this *Oppoſition* was conſiderable, only from the *known Characters* of thoſe who *compoſed* it; their great Fortunes, and extenſive Influence in their reſpective Countries; but by Degrees, it received conſiderable Acceſſions, and towards the End of the laſt Reign, it was become very formidable in point of *Numbers*. At the beginning, Gentlemen could ſcarce conceive that Perſons of *high Rank*, and who were look'd upon as

Men of *great Parts*, could ſtoop to ſuch *low* and *little* Things as were frequently charg'd upon the Adminiſtration; but when they ſaw with how much Induſtry all *Enquires* were avoided, with what an *Air* of *Inſolence* the *Loſs* of a *whole Branch* of the *publick Revenue*, merely through Negligence, was ſtiled a *pedling Affair*, and what a Point was made of *bringing off*, or *ſcreening* every *little Offender*; they began to open their Eyes, and to diſcover an Inclination of looking more nicely than had been cuſtomary for many Years paſt into *publick Accompts*, which Inclination of theirs excited ſuch a Vigilance on the other Side, as ſhew'd plainly this was a *ſore Place*, and would not bear *touching*.

The Affair of the *publick Debts* ſeemed to be a Matter of ſuch mighty Conſequence, that all *Propoſals* relating to them, were well *heard* by all who meant well to their Country, of what Party ſoever, and yet abundance of *rational Propoſals* for putting them into a better Train of Payment were rejected upon plauſible Pretences, till at length the *People* in *Power*, by a dextrous Application to the *Paſſions* of Men in the *monied* and in the *landed Intereſt*, brought Things into ſuch a *Method*, as plainly ſhewed they never intended to Pay them at all. By applying the Produce of the Sinking-Fund to the Service of the current Year, this End was attained, and though the Nation ſuffered, a great Part of the Nation was made eaſy. This ſhewed the Conſequence of raiſing Taxes lightly, and imperceptibly; for as it defended us from a *Land-Tax*, it drew many of the *Country Gentlemen* to think favourably of it; and as it defended ſuch as drew

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large Intereſt from the *publick Funds*, againſt the Danger to which they were expoſed, of being *paid off*, in caſe that *Fund* had remain'd *untouch'd*; they too were very well pleaſed, and thus a Stop was put to the only Thing that could have ſaved us from deep Diſtreſs, by *leſſening* our Debts, and allowing us *eaſe* in our *Taxes*, and at the ſame Time an *immenſe Revenue* was left in the *Hands* of *Miniſters* which enabled them to *provide* for, and *increaſe* their *Dependants*, till by degrees they became ſo *numerous*, and were ſo well *poſted*, that their *ſervile Echo's* to their Maſters *Demands* came to be almoſt as *loud* and *ſignificant* too, as the *Voice* of the *Nation*.

The expoſing of Abundance of *dirty Attempts* to get Money, and the purſuing even *ſucceſsful Attempts* in *Parliament*, by *Hue* and *Cry* from the *Preſs*, till their Iniquity was made manifeſt to the *meaneſt Capacity*, brought Numbers to think more cooly and conſiſtently than they would otherwiſe have done, and forc'd them, whether they would or not, to diſcern how *low* ſome great Men would ſtoop, and what vaſt *Loads* were to be heaped on the already overloaded People, in caſe the Majority of their Repreſentatives continued to lend their Aſſiſtance in *laying* them upon their *Backs*. Theſe Diſputes, by being frequently repeated, enlarged even ordinary Underſtanding, and brought the *Arcana Imperii* within the Comprehenſion of the *common Sort of People*. This was complained of as a Kind of *Sacrilege*, a Breach of all *Decorum*, and a ſubverting the very *Foundation* of *Government*. Whereas, in Truth it was no more than delivering the People from that Sort of *Egyptian Darkneſs*, which

which State *Conjurers* ſo well know how to *raiſe*, in order to cover themſelves. It was explaining a *Myſtery* in which the People had a *high Concern*; it was ſhewing them *how* their *Money* went, and *how* they were *fleec'd*, without *feeling* the *Sheers*. In ſhort, it was doing by them, what any honeſt Man would do by a *young Heir*; it was ſetting the *Arts* of theſe *ſmooth Cozeners*, in a proper Light, and taking Care to give the Nation *fair Warning* of the *Hands* they were in. A Practice every way *laudable*, notwithſtanding its Tendency to deſtroy the *Reſpect* generally paid to *great Men*. Neither was this a *Fault* or an *Inconvenience*, but rather an *Advantage*; for Reſpect is only due to *Benefactors*; when the *Great* turn *Plunderers*, a *free People* owe them *ſomewhat elſe*.

In Time too, the *penal Law* began to be known by their *Fruit*; all the *fine Promiſes* that had been made as to their deſtroying *Smuggling*, came to nothing; ſince it was found, that thoſe *Hardſhips* which bore ſo heavy on *honeſt Men*, never reach'd ſuch as they were ſaid to be *intended for*. It was frequently obſerved, that the ſharpeſt of theſe *Acts* would *ſleep* quietly for ſeveral Years, and *wake* regularly at the Approach of an *Election*. The Trading Part of the World, who at firſt promiſed themſelves *Relief* from theſe ſubtile Contrivances, which they fancied would at leaſt defend them from *Interlopers*, and put all who *paid* the *Duty*, on the *ſame Foot*, though a hard one, were quickly undeceived, and taught to their Coſt, that *Hardſhips* once ſubmitted to, are never to be *ſhook off*, though *Conditions* were talk'd of at the Time of the Impoſition. A Concurrence of theſe Circumſtances, occaſioned *Bills* of this Nature

ture to find a *ſlower Paſſage* than uſual, there being none ready to *ſupport* them, except ſuch as *found* their *Account* in them.

Foreign Affairs took their turn in *publick Examinations*, and though at firſt it was hardly believ'd that a *Britiſh Adminiſtration* would enter into *Treaties* burthenſome to *Britain*, yet when *Seſſions* after *Seſſions*, Meaſures of this Kind were *expoſed*, their Motives *explained*, and their Conſequences *foretold*, many who found the Gentlemen in the Oppoſition, *true Prophets*, began to think them *good Politicians*, eſpecially when they ſaw that we frequently *chang'd Sides*, and that in Spight of theſe Changes, we were always on the *ſame Side* with *France*, though till then our *Intereſts* were held *irreconcileable*. Thus was that Strength gained, which render'd the *Oppoſition* ſo conſiderable at the Cloſe of the late King's Reign, at the very Point of Time when ſome think he began to ſee Things in the *ſame Light* with the Gentlemen in the *Oppoſition*.

The Dawn of a *new Reign* inclined every Body to think, that Things would take a *new turn*, eſpecially as they were now generally underſtood, and the King was known to be a ſteady Lover of Honour and Juſtice. Upon this, the *Oppoſition* laid down their Arms, and went with as great Eagerneſs to pay their Obedience to the new Monarch, as if they had been ſure of *thoſe Places*, which they never *expected*. They manifeſted their *Concern*, and even their *Complaiſance* in many other Reſpects, purely to ſhew that their *former Conduct* was the Effect of *Principle*, not of *Prejudice* or *Seliſhneſs*. But when it clearly appeared that the ſame Meaſures were ſtill purſued, when a *Profuſion* of *public Money*

Money was demanded as a Proof of *Affection* for the *Crown*, they readily return'd to the *Service* of their *Country*, and ſacrificing all *Hopes* of *Favour*, reſumed their former *Oppoſition* of whatever appeared to them injurious to the *Intereſts* of their *Conſtituents*.

The Force of this *Oppoſition*, was now ſo ſenſibly felt, that there was no longer any *truſting* to the *old Arts* of *Management*; but Recourſe was had to *bolder Expedients*, and this with ſuch *Succeſs* for a Time, that it bid fair for deſtroying *all Oppoſition*, and for eradicating the *Hopes* of all who expected to redreſs Grievances by a *legal Method*. But as *Succeſs* is very apt to make *bad Men* inſolent, ſo many who earn their *Wages*, were *Fools* enough to grow proud of their *Service*, and to declare themſelves as much the *Dependants* of ONE MAN, as if they had worn his *Livery*. This Imprudence contributed to the *Safety* of the *Society*, and like an *Eruption* in an *Epidemic Fever*, ſhewed plainly, that the *State* was ſick at *Heart*. The *Expence* of maintaining ſuch a Multitude of *craving Creatures*, grew daily greater and greater, and the Manner in which they *earn'd* their *own Livings*, came at laſt to be ſo *notorious*, that all who had a reaſonable Share of *Wiſdom*, and the leaſt remains of *Honeſty*, revolted at once, and by a happy Choice of *proper Repreſentatives*, brought the Matter to a fair Iſſue, and demonſtrated that the *Senſe* of the *Oppoſition* was ſo far from being the Clamour of a handful of idle diſaffected, or diſcontented Men, that it was in reality the *Voice* of the *People*, the Judgment of the uncorrupted, undeceived Part of the *Nation*, and this one would have thought, had been the *Period* of the

the *Oppoſition*, for hitherto the *Engliſh Hiſtory* affords us no Inſtance of the Heads of a *victorious Party* going over to the *Vanquiſhed*, adopting the *Maxims* they *diſclaim'd*, diſavowing their *old Principles*, and acting without Shame or Concern thoſe *Parts*, which for many Years together they had made it their Buſineſs to *expoſe*. This *Wonder* was reſerv'd for *our Time*, and the *Language* it has provoked, will in all Probability prevent ſuch a *ſtrange Sight* from being *ever* ſeen by our *Poſterity*.

If the *Oppoſition* had been what many have affected to repreſent it, a *violent Spirit* rais'd againſt a *particular Perſon*, it ought naturally to have determined when *that Perſon* was *removed* from *Power*; but as it had in reality quite another Foundation, ſo thoſe who are thoroughly acquainted therewith, cannot be much ſurprized at ſeeing this Event produce no *conſiderable Change* in this Reſpect. It may, however, be of very great Service to the Generality of the *People* of *England*, to explain this Matter thoroughly; and as I pretend to ſet the *preſent Oppoſition* in a *true Light*, I ſhall firſt ſhew how this Notion of its being *particularly* directed againſt *one Man*, came to be ſo commonly received: I ſhall next prove the *Weakneſs* and *Folly* of giving in to ſuch a *Story*; and I ſhall afterwards account fairly for the *true Views* of the *Oppoſition*; which having once done, I ſhall think my Taſk perform'd, and leave it, as I apprehend, every *political Controverſy* ought to be left to the free and *unbyaſs'd Judgment* of my *Countrymen*.

When one conſiders how great a Part of Mankind are govern'd by *Appearances*, and how few, how very few, are capable of looking to the *Bottom*

in ſuch kind of *Diſputes* as theſe, it is far from being difficult to conceive how this *falſe Opinion* came ſo generally to prevail. *Two* Things there were which gave ſo ſtrong a Colour to this *Notion*, as might eaſily afford it *Credit* with the *Multitude*. In the firſt Place, this *ſingle Perſon* had been in a Manner at the *Head* of the *Adminiſtration*, from the Time this *Oppoſition* began, and as the Meaſures they all along oppoſed, were ſtrictly and properly ſpeaking, *his Meaſures*, there is no great Wonder to be made, that with many, or moſt People, this *Oppoſition* might be thought *directed* againſt *him*. On the other Side, it muſt be allowed, that there was a *ſecond* Reaſon, ſtill ſtronger than the *firſt*; the Diſcovery of which we owe to Time, and it is this, That a conſiderable Party who had join'd the *Oppoſition*, and by their forwardneſs therein, in ſome meaſure, ſet themſelves at it's *Head*, had really no other *View* than this, as appears by their *deſerting* the *Oppoſition* as ſoon as it was accompliſhed; but that this never was the *Sentiments* of the *Party* in general, will appear to thoſe who conſider the *Pains* they took to *expoſe Meaſures*, not *Men*, and the *remarkable Inſtance* they gave of their being void of all *perſonal Reſentments*.

The Inſtance I mean, is the famous Affair of the MOTION, which has been ſo often canvaſſed, and ſet in ſo many *different Lights*, though it was never yet perhaps conſidered in the *true one*. It was a meaſure, certainly well calculated, to ſerve the Purpoſe for which it was intended; it would have *removed*, had it ſucceeded, *the Man* who block'd up the Way of *ſome other Men* to *Power*. And it had at the ſame Time, an Appearance of

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ſerving the *Oppoſition*, ſo ſtrong an Appearance, that many were drawn into it, who certainly meant well, and did not perceive the *real* Tendency of that *extraordinary Step*. But the *wiſeſt* and *firmeſt* Men in the Oppoſition, could not be drawn into ſuch a *Deſertion* of their *Principles*. They could not be reconciled to a *wrong Method* of doing a *right Thing*. They were afraid of countenancing *arbitary Power*, by ſuch an *Act* of their *own*, and therefore choſe to leave Things to *Time*, and the *Judgment* of the *Nation* in a *new Election*, rather than puſh a particular *Man* in ſuch a Way, as might ſeem to determine their *Diſlike* to *Him* and *his Meaſures*, rather than to the *Meaſures themſelves*, by whomſoever purſued. In this, they were certainly right, and this Mark of their high Spirit, true Generoſity, and admirable good Senſe, ought for ever to ſtop the Mouths of thoſe, who would reſolve *their Oppoſition* into an inveterate Averſion to a *ſingle Perſon*.

There could not certainly be any Thing *wiſer* in ſuch as had the *Safety* of this *ſingle Perſon* at Heart, than to propagate to the utmoſt of their Power this Notion, that the *Oppoſition* was form'd againſt *Him*, and againſt *Him only*. The *Britiſh* Nation in general, are too generous, too honeſt a People to take Pleaſure in the perſecuting from private Prejudices a *great Man*, merely becauſe he is *Great*, and therefore the conſidering the *Oppoſition* in this Light, weaken'd its *Force*, and abated its *Credit* conſiderably. The ſame People took alſo a great deal of Pains to place this in ſtill a ſtronger View, by repreſenting the *private Character* of *the Perſon* they ſuppoſed to be the *But* of the *Oppoſition*, as every way aimable. He was in their Language,

the moſt *humane*, the moſt *benificent*, the moſt *courteous* Man living; and above all Things, they magnified that *Decency* and *Moderation*, with which he treated his Antagoniſt, and the *Calmneſs* he conſtantly preſerved in *Spite* of all the *rude Attacks* that were made upon *him*. Add to this, that even an *Error* in their *Conduct*, contributed not a little to the *Succeſs* of *their Deſign*; for inſtead of defending *Meaſures*, they conſtantly defended *him*, and by perpetually repeating this Story of the *Oppoſition*'s being *perſonal*, which they were perhaps *weak enough* to *believe*, they at laſt hammer'd it into the Head of *many*, and at the ſame Time obliged the *Chiefs* of the *other Side* to act in ſuch a Manner, as if the *Facts* they related, had been *true*. But the *Inſtance* I have mention'd, clearly refutes all theſe Pretences, and juſtifies the Oppoſition from any *Imputation* on this *Head*, ſince thoſe who ſupported the *Motion* from *Principle*, did it upon this *Diſtinction*; that *Places* were no Man's *Birthright*, and conſequently an Attempt to *remove* a Man from *them*, was no *Attack* upon his *Perſon*; while on the other Hand, ſuch of the Oppoſition as were *againſt* the *Motion*, were *againſt* it, becauſe they thought it *perſonal*, and in that Light, repugnant to their *Principles*.

The *Defeat* of this *Scheme* of the *Motion*, which the Friends of the late Adminiſtration, who were certainly no very *penetrating Politicans*, look'd upon as the *Ruin* of the *Oppoſition*, in reality *reſtor'd* it, and proved, as they might eaſily have foreſeen, the *Ruin* of *themſelves*. When Gentlemen came to conſider ſeriouſly, and without Paſſion, on what Motives they had acted in that Affair, it appear'd clearly, that the Project of the *Motion* ſtood upon

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too narow a *Bottom*; ſince in reality their Buſineſs was to condemn a Series of *deſtructive Meaſures*; rather than to *ſtrike* at a *ſingle Man*, either in his *perſonal*, or *miniſterial* Capacity. The former was altogether *conſiſtent* with their *Principles*, as an *Oppoſition*; but the latter had ſuch an Air of *private Prejudice*, as gave all their *Proceedings* an Appearance of *Faction*. It was therefore, no Wonder that after debating this Matter thoroughly among themſelves, the *Iſſue* of the *Diſpute* was a *cloſer Union* than ever. For when Men ſee that they ALL mean *right* in the *Main*, and that the Points about which they *differ* are prejudicial to their *common Intereſt*, it neceſſarily engages them to concur with their *utmoſt Force* in *thoſe* Things in which they are *clear*, and to avoid differing in *leſſer Matters* at leaſt till the *main Thing* be carried. This then was the *Reſult* of their *Conferences* on that *Diſappointment*, and thus borrowing *Strength* from their late *Defeat*, the *Oppoſition* became *firmer* and more *formidable* than ever, and this at a Time when *ſome ſhort-ſighted* Politicians conſider'd them as *broken* beyond a Poſſibility of *rallying*, and thus they gained a double Advantage from the *Wiſdom* of their *own* Conduct, and the *weak Judgment* of *thoſe* whom they *oppoſed*.

The *Event* as I obſerved before, fully juſtified this Method of reaſoning, and ſufficiently ſhew'd the *Difference* between a *Perſonal* and a *National Oppoſition*. The Reſolutions that had been taken to ſtick entirely to the *latter*, and to reject whatever carried the leaſt Aſpect of the *former*, operated at the very Beginning of the *Seſſions*, and to the Amazement of ſuch as expected to have ſeen

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the *Patriots* acting like *Huſſars*, by ſudden and violent Excurſions, they appear'd a ſteady, well compacted *Phalanx*, which no *Art* could *divide*, and which no *Force* could *break*. All their Motions were equally regular, and well conducted, they ſtood firm upon every *Attack*, and puſh'd all at once whenever they gave the *Aſſault*. Inſtead of ſmart and lively *Harangues*, they confin'd themſelves to ſhort and weighty *Speeches*; they no longer dwelt on the *Overſights* and *Miſcarriages* of *particular Perſons*, but upon the *Concerns* of the *People*; in ſhort, they brought about a *Change* in the *Miniſtry*, by preſſing for a *Change* in *Affairs*. While they continued in this Situation, they *bore* all *before them*, Miniſterial *Arts*, and that kind of *Science* which I am aſhamed to call by the *Name* fixed upon it, by the *greateſt Maſter* therein, *Parliamentary Craft*, ſignified nothing, Victory declared on their Side, and the *Mighty* who had been ſo long uſed to *Conqueſt*, were forced to turn all their Thoughts on a *Retreat*. Such were the *Effects* of an *Oppoſition* acting upon *Principle*, governing all their Motions by a *ſteady Adherence* to the *public Intereſt*, and as ſteady a *Contempt* of *private* and *particular Advantages*. But alas! we muſt ſoon *ſhift* this *Scene*.

As too much *Succeſs* had rendered the *Great* careleſs, and in the End impotent, ſo this ſudden *Reverſe* of *Fortune* brought them *back* to their *Wits*, and though it could not bring them *back* to *Power*, yet it did what was thought next to impoſſible, it *broke* their *Fall*. The Sight of approaching *Ruin* engaged them to change their *former Manner* of *acting*, and now they diſclaim'd in

in their Turn all *perſonal Affection*, and pretended an extraordinary Zeal for the *Whig Intereſt*. This, whether well or ill founded had a mighty Effect, it introduced a *new Spirit*, which ſupplied *Courage* to their *fainting Troops*, it engaged many to appear *warmly* in their *Service*, who were before *indifferent*, and if it did not *diſpoſe*, it at leaſt gave a *Colour* for *ſome* to *come over* to them who had *fought fiercely* on the other Side. As theſe Advantages were gain'd by a *Stroke* of *rational Policy*, ſo they were managed with the utmoſt Dexterities; and I am ſorry to ſay, that Men who had never ſhewn any *great Abilities*, while in the *public Service*, diſcover'd extraordinary *Capacity* when in this critical Conjuncture, they were reduc'd to think only of *ſerving themſelves*. The Point moſt proper for this Purpoſe was, that which they pitch'd upon, for with great *Addreſs* they ſhifted their *Defeat* from the late *Stand* of the *Oppoſition*, to the almoſt forgotten *Attempt* of the *Motion*; and as if *that* had produc'd this *ſurprizing Alteration*, the *Leaders* of a *rejected Project* were ſet at the *Head* of *Affairs*. This tho' it might ſatisfy them, ſatisfied no Body elſe, and the *Nation* was exceedingly amazed to ſee what once happen'd in *Italy*, when the *late* King of *Sardinia* was *General* in chief both of the *French* and *confederate* Armies, happen again in *Britain*, the *ſame Men* at the *ſame Time* being at the *Head* of the *Adminiſtration*, and of the *Oppoſition*.

It is not eaſy to deſcribe the Effects of ſo ſtrange a Revolution. In all great *Parties* there will be a *conſiderable Number* of *Perſons* who from want of *ſound Senſe*, or *ſound Principles*, will *follow* their *Leaders*

Leaders at the *Expence* of their *Cauſe*, and go as their *Chiefs* direct, inſtead of *obeying* or perhaps *examining* the *Dictates* of their *Conſciences*. This was the Caſe here, and a ſtrange Confuſion enſued, ſometimes we ſaw a ſtrong Detachment of *Patriots* charging on the *Side* of *Power*, and ſometimes a *formidable Body* of *Courtiers* making a noble Stand in *Defence* of *Liberty*. In ſhort, this was a *Seaſon* when *wiſe Men knew not* what to ſay, and therefore we need not wonder, that *weak Men* knew not *what to do*. On the whole however this is certain, that *ſome Men's* Heads were more effectually *turn'd* by the *Acquiſition* of *Power*, than the *Hearts* of others were dejected with the *Loſs of it*. Yet to ſhew how *variable* Men are, and how much the *greateſt* are govern'd by the *ebbing* and *flowing* of their *Spirits*, it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that this *little Gleam* of *Succeſs* diſtracted ONE who had recover'd his *Reputation* as to *Capacity*, by the *firmneſs* he had ſhewn on his late *Defeat*. Affecting *Airs* of *Triumph* at *going out* are as diſtaſteful, and conſequently as dangerous as the wearing an *Air* of *Inſolence* when *in*, and the not adverting to this *plain* Maxim, produced ſuch a *Spirit* as nothing elſe could have produced, and prevented that *Flame* from being *extinguiſh'd*, which he had ſo *artfully*, and hitherto ſo *ſucceſsfully* laboured to *ſubdue*. I know I have deliver'd myſelf ſomewhat *obſcurely*, but the *Facts* are *too recent* for me to run any Riſque of being *miſunderſtood*.

A *Miſcarrage* like this, which all but *thorough Politicians* would have eſteemed a *ſlight one*, gave once more a *new Turn* to *Affairs*. The *Body* of the

the *Oppoſition* had again drawn themſelves into pretty good *Order*, and this Accident brought back their *Heads*, or at leaſt determin'd them to *decline* going entirely off ſo *ſoon* as they had firſt *intended*; but at the ſame Time, that this gave the *Oppoſition* ſome *Advantage*, by preſerving its *Strength*, it likewiſe did it not a *little Prejudice* by *diverting* its *Meaſures*. In ſhort, the *Diſpute* became *Perſonal* again, and inſtead of inquiring by what *wrong Steps* the *Nation* had been *injured*, it was reſolved to *enquire* what *wrong Steps* could be fix'd upon a *certain Perſon*. It would be no difficult Thing to ſhew that *he* ſuffer'd *much leſs* by this, than the *Oppoſition* itſelf. There was a great deal of Time waſted to very little Purpoſe, and in this Time that generous *Spirit* which had hitherto actuated the *Oppoſition* vaniſhed by Degrees. Not to dwell too long on ſo *diſagreeable* a *Subject*, the Iſſue of what at firſt was eſteem'd a *national Affair*, became entirely *perſonal*, and that which had for a Time been conſider'd as the moſt *ſolemn Scene* that had ever appear'd on a *political Theatre*, dwindled at length into a *downright Farce*. *Great Men* may be angry when they ſee themſelves made the *Sport*, even of *little People*, but this will always be the Caſe while the *People* remain *free*, and their *great Men* deſcend to do *little Things*.

After running thro' as ſuccinctly as we might the *Hiſtory* of the *Oppoſition*, and ſetting the principal Events which have diſtinguiſh'd *it* from *other Oppoſitions* in their proper Lights, we come now to what is more material, and of far greater Conſequence to the *Public*, *viz.* the Examination of the *Ends* of this *Oppoſition*, or to borrow for once the Lawyer's Phraſe, we are now to look

into the *Merits* of the *Cauſe*, and with that Earneſtneſs which becomes *honeſt Men*, and that Fund of good Senſe which has ever been allow'd us as *Britons*, to enquire whether the *Principles* of this *Oppoſition* conduce to *diſturb* and *diſtreſs* this Nation; or whether properly purſued, they have not the ſtrongeſt Tendency to *free* us from all our *Misfortunes*, and to ſilence the *Noiſe*, by taking away the *Cauſes* of our *Complaints*. This is to be the Buſineſs of the ſucceeding Pages, and this I ſhall treat as clearly and plainly as the Subject will bear, without ſtraining *Facts*, or uſing a *declamatory Stile*, which very little become an Advocate for TRUTH, whoſe *Charms* like thoſe of a perfect Beauty, cannot be heightened, but may be eaſily *abated* by the Interpoſition of *Art*.

In the firſt Place then, we muſt learn to ſatisfy ourſelves, whether the Nation really *ſuffers* under any *Difficulties*, or whether (as a very artful Writer would perſuade us) we are only troubled with *political Spleen*. Now a Nation *ſuffers*, or at leaſt may *ſuffer* ſeveral Ways; but particularly by theſe *three*, when *reſpect* to its Government *declines*, when it's *beſt Laws* are *worſe executed*, and when *greater Sums* are levied for the *public Service*, than the *Fortunes* of *private People* can bear. By *any*, much more *all* of theſe Nation may be *enervated*, and brought to the *Brink* of *Ruin*, as the Hiſtory of every one great *Monarchy* or flouriſhing *State* that is now decayed will ſufficiently *prove*.

As to the *firſt* of theſe *political Maladies*, the Symptoms which uſually attend it are *univerſal Uneaſineſs*, a general *Diſtaſte* of *Power*, and a want of all *Reverence* towards every *Rank* of *Magiſtrates*. The ancient Hiſtory of the *Hebrews* affords

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us a ſhort and excellent Definition of this Miſchief; for whenever it reign'd amongſt that People the Phraſe uſed to expreſs it is, *there was no* King *in* Iſrael, that is, *no Ruler* whoſe *Authority* was *regarded*, or whoſe *Decrees* were held *ſacred*. In the ancient *Greek* Republics, there were *Magiſtrates* aſſign'd by the *Conſtitution* to *watch* over *it*, with a View to prevent this *dangerous Diſeaſe* of *State*. In *Athens* they were ſtiled *Archons*, in *Sparta*, *Ephori*, and ſo long as theſe did *their Duty*, the People never failed in *theirs*. But when theſe *forgot* their *Characters*, and endeavour'd to apply the *Power* veſted in them to *private Purpoſes*, inſtead of the *public Service*, they ſoon loſt their *Credit*, and the *State* its *Being*. The like happen'd to the *Romans*, when the *Tribunes* affected to be their *Princes*, inſtead of their *Protectors*, and brought the *Weight* of the *People* to bear intollerably hard upon that *Frame* of *Government*, which it had been their *Intereſt* to *ſupport*. When the *Names* and *Shadows* of *uſeful Offices* only remain, and the *Ends* for which they were inſtituted are *neglected*, *Authority* is *loſt* of Courſe, nor is there any Method of proving that *Government* was inſtituted for the Sake of the *governed*, more plain than this, that whenever it *ceaſes* to *promote* this *End*, it becomes the Object either of *Hatred* or *Contempt*. Of *Hatred*, if ſupported by an *armed Force*, of *Contempt*, if it be *deſtitute* of that *Guard*: This is a fair and candid Account of the *Matter*, drawn from *Reaſon* and *Experience*, by which Men arrive at *Certainty*, and not an artful *Deduction* of a precarious *Propoſition* by the *Help* of *Rhetorical Flouriſhes*.

As to the *ſecond* Diſtemper I have mention'd, it commonly diſcovers itſelf by a *boundleſs Propenſity* to *Pleaſure*, a prodigious *Relaxation* of *Principles*, and an *Epidemic Corruption* of *Manners*. The *old* Book I cited before has a wondrous pathetic Phraſe for this Grievance, for as often as the People were in this Condition, they are ſaid *to have done every Man what was right in his own Eyes*. How accurate, how expreſſive this Deſcription! To follow the Dictates of *private Intereſt*, to purſue the *Projects* plann'd by our *Paſſions*, to run wildly into the *Gratification* of every ſenſual *Appetite*, or every idle *Whim* of a diſtemper'd *Imagination*, merely to indulge *ourſelves* without Reſpect to *Society*, is that *kind* of *Diſorder* which I meant to trace. When the *Bulk* of any *Nation* comes to be agitated by ſuch a *Spirit*, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that however excellent their *Laws*, they muſt ſtand repealed in *Fact*, though they retain their *Places* ſtill in their *Statute Books*. It was ſo at *Athens*, when ſhe boaſted herſelf the *politeſt* and the *freeſt State* in *Greece*. The City was adorn'd with the nobleſt *Buildings*, her Citizens were rever'd *abroad*, and appeared with the greateſt *Eclat* at home; her Commerce was moſt *extenſive*, her Fame at its *higheſt Pitch* when *Alcibiades* then a Boy, gave *Pericles* this wiſe Advice, that *ſince it puzzled him to make up the public Accompts, he had beſt ſtudy how he might avoid making them up at all*. The *Corruption* of the *Times* made it eaſy for him to carry this Scheme into Execution, and he *eſcaped* by plunging his *Country* into the *Peloponneſian* War, by which ſhe was *undone* for *ever*. At *Rome* the Caſe was the ſame, when the *great Men* began to value themſelves on a *fine Taſte*, and an *immenſe*

immenſe Expence, inſtead of that *unblemiſh'd Probity* and *illuſtrious Poverty* by which their *Anceſtors* were diſtinguiſhed, Things quickly took a *new Turn*, and that glorious *Common-wealth* which had been the *Miſtreſs* of *Nations*, and the *Sovereign* of the *World*, ſunk into *Slavery*, the meaneſt and baſeſt Slavery, becoming a *Prey* to the moſt *unworthy* of her *Subjects*.

As to the *laſt* of the *Caſes* hinted at before, it's Marks are the moſt *evident* of all. A People affected thereby, feel the *Pangs* of *Poverty*, without diſcerning its true *Cauſe*; becauſe thoſe who ought to *enquire* into, and *redreſs* their *Grievances*, employ all their Skill and Pains either to *ſtifle* or *Diſguiſe* them. Such a Nation, ſenſible of *declining Trade*, aſcribe it now to *one* Thing, then to *another*, and by injudicious Attempts to *rid* them of ſuppoſed *Burdens*, render themſelves ſtill more incapable of bearing *that Load* which they want the *Judgment* to ſhake off. Inſtead of *virtuous Induſtry*, there prevails amongſt them a *fraudulent Dexterity* in coining artificial *Riches*, which ſerve to *conceal* their true Condition from *themſelves*, and to defend for a while the moſt *cunning* amongſt them, from the *Miſeries* felt by the *moſt Worthy*. We have no Examples of this kind in *antient Hiſtory*, but the Inſtances which occur in the *Memoirs* of later *Ages*, are too numerous to be ſo much as mention'd. The great Kingdom of *Spain*, has long groaned under this kind of *Oppreſſion*. The *two* famous States of *Venice* and *Genoa*, have ſuffer'd their *Glories* to *fade*, and their Strength to be exhauſted, by not attending in Time to this *Canker*, and I could name another *Republic*, which is at laſt

laſt become ſenſible of this *Evil*, though ſomewhat of the *lateſt*. Before I diſmiſs this Subject, I muſt obſerve, that this Sort of *Conſumption* is unknown to *arbitrary Governments*. Under them, *Oppreſſion* is a *Feaver*, the *Acuteneſs* of which quickly obliges their *Rulers* to have Recourſe to *proper Remedies*, how little *Pity* ſoever they may have in their *own Natures*. There muſt be ſome *kind* of *Liberty* to nouriſh this *lingring Diſeaſe*, and to *feed* the *Patient* with *Hopes* till the *Diſtemper* preys upon the *Vitals*.

If therefore the *Symptoms*, inſeperable from theſe *Maladies*, are undeniably to be *met* with *amongſt us*, we may very ſafely conclude, that our Condition is very *dangerous*, and that nothing can prevent it from becoming *deſperate*, but timely Attention, and a ſpeedy and vigorous Application of *proper Remedies*. For, as it is certainly falſe Practice, when *State Phyſicians* feed the Humour of their Patients, and encourage them in taking unneceſſary *Medicines*, by favouring *vulgar Miſtakes*, and nurſing *imaginary Diſeaſes*; ſo on the other Hand, it is as inexcuſable to *poſſeſs* them with *falſe* Notions of their own *Strength*, and by furniſhing them with *artificial Spirits* to keep them in perpetual *Exerciſe*, too violent perhaps for them even when in *full Health*, till their *Conſtitutions* are quite exhauſted, and *Death* and *Deſpair* ſurprize them at once. When a *Nation* is in ſuch Circumſtances, thoſe who *flatter* them *leaſt*, are undoubtedly their *beſt Friends*, and ſuch as are for going to the *Bottom* of Things, *better Phyſicians* than thoſe, who for the Sake of their *own Profit*, and perhaps

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a pretty large Share of *preſent Applauſe*, would content themſelves with a *palliative Cure*.

In applying what has been already ſaid to the *State* of our *own* Nation, I ſhall make Uſe of all that Tenderneſs and Precaution which ſo *nice* a *Subject* requires. In the *firſt* Place, then it is certain, that from the *Revolution* to *this Time*, the People have upon very many Occaſions, betrayed a great *Diſreſpect* towards their *Governors*, and this not only againſt *particular Adminiſtrations*, but againſt the *Legiſlature* itſelf. The Pretence has always been the *ill Conduct* of their *Governors*, and that *this* in *all* Caſes has not been a *mere Pretence*, will ſufficiently appear if we conſider that in ſome Part of King *William*'s Reign, their *Diſatisfaction* to the *Miniſtry* was countenanced by the *Houſe* of *Commons*, as in the *latter* Part of that *Reign*, their *Diſlike* to the *Houſe* of *Commons* was approved and applauded by the *Court*, and they were encouraged to take ſuch *Liberties* with their *Repreſentatives*, as appear ſurprizing to us, who live in *later* and *calmer Times*. In the *Reign* of Queen Anne, the People had ſuch a Veneration for the *Church*, that they were thought deficient in their *Regard* to the *Miniſtry*, the *Queen*, and the *Parliament* itſelf, but in time they fully juſtified themſelves to *her Majeſty*, by reſenting that *State* of *Dependance*, in which ſhe was held by *ſome great Men*, and carrying their Point at *laſt*, what had been *Faction* for ſo many Years together, was taken for *Sterling Loyalty*, which was capable of bearing every *Teſt*. In the *four* laſt Years of the *Queen*, a great Part of the Nation grew out of Humour with the *Meaſures* ſhe purſued, and re-

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flected ſeverely on the *Parliament* which ſupported them. This Conduct of theirs, was fully juſtified by a *Parliamentary Enquiry* in the *laſt* Reign, the *Severity* of which in a great Meaſure recovered the *Credit* of that *Auguſt Aſſembly*, and taught the People to honour as became them, the *great Council* of the *Nation*, the natural *Truſtees* of our *Properties*, and the *legal Guardians* of our *Liberty*.

By Degrees, however, this *Awe* wore off again, and in proceſs of Time, there grew up a *ſtrong Spirit* of *Jealouſy* and *Diſcontent*, eſpecially after the *South-Sea Scheme* took Place, and on it's Detection, the *Criminals* were *countenanced* by thoſe to whom it belonged of right to have puniſhed the *Miſdemeanours* they had committed. Thence forward, the Common People grew afraid of *thoſe* who ought to have been their *ſureſt Refuge*, and began to ſurmiſe, that the *Senate* took *too large* a Share of *Power* to themſelves, and left *too little* to *thoſe* from whom they *deriv'd* it. Stung with theſe Apprehenſions, and Daily provok'd with what they took, for Inſtances of that *Diſpoſition*, which gave *Diſtate*, they loſt all *Temper*, and fell exactly into thoſe *Notions*, which we have ſhewn to be moſt *Dangerous* to a *free Government*.

In this Situation, Things were, when the Authors of the *preſent Oppoſition*, propoſed their *Plan*, for reſtoring the *Spirit* of the *Conſtitution*, and Eradicating theſe *Fears*, from the *Breaſts* of the *People*, whom they were willing to have gratified in *two* Points, *Viz.* The *Shortning* the *Duration* of *Parliaments*, and the excluding *ſuch Perſons*, from *Seats* there, as might be Suſpected of having *particular Intereſts*, incompatible with *Public Truſt*. This

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Project of theirs was ſo plauſible, that we need not wonder a very *great* Part of the *Nation* gave into it, eſpecially when we conſider, that the *wiſeſt Perſons* in the *Kingdom*, even *thoſe* who in this critical Juncture have been *advanced* to the *Helm*, approv'd theſe *Propoſals*, and contended warmly for their being *carried* into *Execution*. It muſt be owned, that notwithſtanding many Years *Struggle*, and an *Oppoſition* carried on with *equal Spirit* and *Induſtry*, they were ſtill *baffled*, by Dint of *Voices* however, and not of *Argument*; for theſe *great Patriots* moſt judiciouſly inſiſted, that their not being able to *carry* theſe *Points*, was the fulleſt *Proof* of their *Rectitude*, ſince they were defeated by *Men* who had viſibly an *Intereſt* in keeping Parliaments *long* on *Foot*, and thought themſelves bound to *defend* the *Innocency* of *Places*, becauſe they *enjoyed them*. Now upon this Subject it is difficult to pronounce, for beyond Queſtion the People are as to it ſtill *diſſatisfied*, and with Reſpect to the *Seaſonableneſs* of the *Remedy*, we can ſay nothing againſt it which will not juſtify thoſe whom the *Voice* of the *Nation* condemn'd *laſt Year*, and at the ſame Time *reflect* on the *Judgment* of our *preſent great Men*, who ſo ſtrenuouſly maintain'd the *Expediency*, and ſo often divided in favour of a *Law* to *repeal* the *Septennial Act*, and for a *comprehenſive Place-Bill*.

We muſt indeed allow, that they have *chang'd* their Sentiments ſince, and that as they are *older*, they ought conſequently to be *wiſer*. But then here lies the Misfortune, they have now an *Intereſt* in *long Parliaments*, which they had not *before*, and they have *ſwallow'd* thoſe *Places* for

which they declared they had no *Appetite*. Upon this ſudden *Turn* in their Conduct, *two* very hard Queſtions have been *moved*, the *firſt* is, whether this Departure from their *Principles*, does not deprive their *preſent Reaſonings* of all *Authority*; for how can we take their *Words* now, for what the other Day they *denied?* The other is, whether their *own Example* is not the cleareſt Demonſtration that can be demanded of the *Validity* of their *former Arguments*; for muſt not ſuch Things be *exceſſively dangerous* to a free *People*, as have produced ſuch *ſtrange Effects* upon their *Friends*. Theſe Gentlemen were very lately owned the *wiſeſt* and *ableſt* Perſons in the *Kingdom*, and when they were ſo acknowledg'd, they told us, that *Placemen* were *dangerous* in *Parliament*, becauſe their *Places* influenced their *Conduct*, do not their *Actions teach* us ſo ſtill? Would any *ſober Man* be perſuaded out of his *Love* of *Temperance*, by hearing a *Philoſopher* declaim in Favour of *Drunkenneſs*, if he ſaw that *contrary* to *Cuſtom* the *Sage* had got a *Cup in his Head?*

To ſpeak farther to this *Point* with Candour and Decency. We muſt acknowledge, that *unbounded Licence* reigns amongſt us, that the *common People* have loſt *Reſpect* for *Dignity*, and that the *middle Sort* are full of *Jealouſies* and *Suſpicions*. The *Court Writers* are continually complaining of the *former*, and their *own Inſtructions* ſufficiently teſtify the *Senſe* of the *latter*. The *Fact* then is out of *Diſpute*, we are certainly *ſick* of this dangerous *Diſeaſe*; the next Thing to be enquired is, whether we ought to follow the *Advice* of *thoſe* who propoſe to us a Method of eradicating the *Cauſe* of the

the *Diſtemper*, or whether we ſhall let it *take its Courſe*, becauſe our *Quondam Doctors* are become *above* their *Buſineſs*. If they have chang'd their *Language*, they muſt be very *popular* indeed to introduce their *new Dialect* in ſo ſhort a Time too throughout the *Nation*, and to talk of *forcing* the *People* to alter their *Tone* would be likewiſe a little *hard*, ſince they are but *Parrots* of their own *teaching*. What may be now ſtiled the *Clamour* of the *Mob*, was t'other Day the *Voice* of the *Nation*, and ſo avow'd to be by the *Folks* of whom I am ſpeaking, and as to the *Buſineſs* of *inſtructing*, the *Form*, is all that belongs to the *Places* from whence they come, they take their *Matter* from your *own Report*. This is the plain, the *naked Truth*, I have kept ſtrictly to my Promiſe, I have not either *coined a Fact*, or *heighten'd* any *Matter* of *Fact* by my manner of *relating* it.

The *Merit* then of the *Oppoſition* in this Reſpect lies here. They have propoſed to ſecure the *Freedom* of *Parliament*, by reſtraining the unwarrantable Practices of *returning Officers*, of which we have had ſuch flagrant as well as ſuch recent *Examples*, and which left even the *Mob* without a Doubt, that one of the moſt *ſolemn Acts* in our *Government*, might through the *Iniquity* of a very *inſignificant Inſtrument* be turned into a *downright Farce*. Having thus ſecured the *Door*, they next propoſed *ſweeping* the *Houſe*, and this by a full and comprehenſive *Place-Bill*. The Reaſon of the Thing has been over and over *determined* by the *Legiſlature*, the ſingle Point now in Queſtion is, whether theſe *Acts* ſhall be *living Laws*, or *dead Letters*, whether they ſhall be Things for *Shew*,

or for *Uſe?* When this Proviſion was made, the *Oppoſition* were for going one Step farther, and having provided againſt the known Methods of affecting the *Freedom* of *Parliaments*, they were deſirous of aſſigning a Remedy too for the Miſchiefs that might be introduced by the intriguing *Heads* of bad *Miniſters* in ſucceeding Times, and with this View they inſiſted on the *Repeal* of the *Septennial Act*. Will any Man ſay, that this *Scheme* is at all *inconſiſtent*, or that it is calculated to ſerve *private Purpoſes*; or is there any Reaſon, that they ſhould give it *up*, when the *great Men* who were very lately in the *ſame Sentiments*, have not thought fit to preſcribe *any other Method* for the *Cure* of that *Diſeaſe*, which they ſtill acknowlege, and which they ſeem to be apprehenſive, may *ſome Time* or *other* become *fatal* to *themſelves*, as well as to the *State*.

As to the *ſecond* Point, the *Libertiniſm* of our *Morals* is to the full as notorious as the *Licentiouſneſs* of our *Speech*. We are become as remarkable for *Corruption*, as we were formerly for our *public Spirit*. This is confeſſed by *ourſelves*, and publiſhed through all the *World*, and therefore one would think, that every Man who is *free* from this *Taint*, ſhould be deſirous of ſeeing ſuch a *national Reflection* wiped off. I will not ſay that the Source of this great Miſchief has been the Conduct of *People* in *Power*; but moſt certain it is, that if *Corruption* once reigns in *high Life*, the *Reformation* muſt begin *there*. It is a vain Thing to expect that the *Vulgar* ſhould be *honeſt*, when *Honeſty* is laughed at by their *Betters*, and it is ridiculous to ſuppoſe, that the *Laws* ſhould anſwer their

their *Ends* in *common Affairs*, when it is evident, that they have *loſt* their *Power* in thoſe of a ſuperior Nature. To ſpeak the *Truth*, which can never be a *Crime* amongſt *free People*, every Nation is guided by the *Examples* of ſuch as are moſt diſtinguiſhed therein by *Birth*, by *Fortune*, or by *Office*, and if there be *no Religion*, no reſpect to *Principle*, no regard to *public Good* viſible amongſt *them*, we cannot expect to find it among ſuch as in the *Nature of Things*, muſt be their *Dependants*.

We may eaſily illuſtrate this, by a *too well known* Example. When a Man of Rank takes it into his Head to alter the *Nature* of our *Conſtitution*, by making himſelf Maſter of a *Country Corporation*, and turning a Town veſted with a Right of ſending *Members* to *Parliament* into *his Borough*, the Methods that he takes, will go near to ruin the *Morals*, as well as to ſubvert the *Freedom* of ſuch a Place. In the firſt Place, the *Notions* of the *Inhabitants* muſt be vitiated, they muſt be taught to prefer their *own Intereſt*, to that of *the Public*, and when they have done this, what ſhall hinder them from preferring their *own Intereſt* to *every other Man's?* By this Step, the very Baſis of fair *Dealing*, is undermined, and a Man loſes his *Principles* for *ever*. Next, he muſt be brought to believe that *Attachment* to the *great Man's* Intereſt, is a *Point* of *Honour*, and thus he is in the Situation of a *Highwayman*, who ſubſtitutes *fair Dealing* to the *Gang*, inſtead of *Obedience* to the *Laws*, and fancies himſelf after *repeated* Acts of Villainy, a *Man* of *Honour* forſooth, becauſe he is not *faithleſs* to his *Fellows*. Laſtly, every ſuch Perſon is bound to *hate* and *deride*, to *counteract* and *miſrepreſent*

preſent all who are not in his *great Man's Intereſt*. By proceeding in this Road, he loſes the Dignity of a *free-born Briton*, and becomes as much a *Vaſſal* as his *Forefathers*, who by the Name of *Villains*, were ſold together with the *Eſtate*, and a *Lord* transferred them with as little Ceremony, as the *Trees* that grew upon it. Such is the Progreſs of Knavery, Deceit, and Corruption; by ſuch ſwift Strides, it paſſes from *one End* of a *Country* to *another*, and the *bad Examples* of a *few*, become ſufficient to *miſlead* ſometimes the *greater Part* of a *Nation*.

Every *Mayor*, *Bailiff*, or other *Head Officer*, of a little *Borough*, acts entirely on the ſame Principles with a *Prime Miniſter*. If he is a Man of *Integrity*, and *wiſhes well* to his *Country*, and has withal a *clear Head*, and *good natural Parts*, he will procure many *Advantages* to the *Place* where he *preſides*; if on the other Hand, he be a *weak Man*, he will do *leſs good* indeed; but then he will do *no hurt*. But if ſuch a Perſon be a *venal* and *corrupt* Man, he will be able to deſſiminate his *Vices* through the whole *Extent* of his *Juriſdiction*, he will quickly either find or make *fit Inſtruments* for his *ſiniſter Purpoſes*, and when he has once brought Men to think as he does, it will require an *Age* to purge out that *Villainy* which he will introduce in a *Year*. When once Men come to treat the *public Intereſt* lightly, they ſoon run into the *groſſeſt Diſhoneſty*; for the whole *Syſtem* of *Morality* is built on a *political Baſis*, and when we loſe all Reverence for *the whole*, reſpect for *Individuals* can never hold us long. It may be true, that ſome *great Men* have behaved *well* in *private Life*, though *wickedly* in

in their *public Characters*; but then on a ſtrict Review, this will be found either the *Effect* of a *natural Diſpoſition*, for which no Man deſerves *Praiſe*, or of a *refined Policy*, that the amiableneſs of his private *Character*, may ſcreen him from *public Juſtice*. But in the common Courſe of Things, the *Caſe* is quite *otherwiſe*, and a *bad Man* in *Office*, is a *bad Man* in *every other Reſpect*.

But when theſe *Machiavilean* Notions have prevailed for ſome time, they ſpread themſelves *ſo far*, and meet with ſo many *Defenders*, that *Honeſty* is put quite *out* of *Countenance*, and a Man who pretends to *feel* any Thing like a *Senſe* of *Virtue* or *public Spirit*, is treated as a *Hypocrite*, or an *Enthuſiaſt*. It is when Things are come to this paſs, that a Country is in the *utmoſt Danger*; that the *Inhabitants* ſtand on the very brink of *Ruin*, and can be ſaved only by *frighting* them ſo much, as to make them ſtart back. I will not ſay, that this is *our Caſe*, and yet a *certain Report* has ſaid it, and that *Report* we know was framed by the *Friends* of thoſe *great Folks*, who are now ready to frown if you mention *Corruption*. Yet, alas! if that *Report* be true, as we all know it is but *too true*, there never was ſuch a *Sink* of *Corruption* as this Iſland, and to think that diſplaying this *Filth*, is equivalent to cleanſing it, or that changing one *Set* of *Names* for *another*, is ſufficient to *attone* for ſuch a *Series* of *Offences* againſt the *Public*, is to believe what Mr. *Voltaire* ſays is true, *viz.* That we are no more like our *Forefathers*, than the *modern Italians* are like the *old Romans*, of which, if I were once convinced, I ſhould not only think *Writing*, but *Living*, to little Purpoſe.

Having

Having ſhewn that *the Great*, and *the Oppoſition* are thus far *agreed*, that *Corruption* hath made a *fatal Progreſs* amongſt us, we are next to conſider, what *both Parties* have propoſed, in order to remove ſo *black* a *Stain*, and to cure ſo dangerous an *Evil*. The *Oppoſition* have been for *examining* this Matter to the *bottom*, for laying all theſe *Practices* open, and for *puniſhing* ſuch as have been *concerned* in them. This would certainly be an efficacious *Remedy*, it would convince the Nation of *two* Things; *firſt*, that *injuring* the *Public*, contriving the *Ruin* of our *Government*, and *debaſing* the *Minds* of the *People*, are really *Crimes*, and not *Arcana Imperii*, the lawful *Practices* of *Miniſters*, and ſuch as their *Trade* requires, which ſome have not ſcrupled to *give out*. *Secondly*, it would ſhew all the World, that we are ſtill *ſound* at *Heart*, that we have yet *Probity* enough to *ſtart* at ſuch *Iniquities*, and that we do not want *Courage* or *Power* to puniſh them. Theſe Reflections I muſt own, I have borrowed from the *Report* itſelf, and as it is the only *Quotation* I ſhall make, I beg Leave to give it the *Reader* as it *ſtands there*, that he may be convinced of the *eminent Peril* we are in, and learn from thence to diſcover whether there be yet a Poſſibility of our *eſcaping* or *not*. Thus *ſpeaks* the *Report*.

" This *Method* of *Corruption* is *as ſure*, and " therefore your Committee apprehends *as cri-* " *minal* a Way of *ſubverting* the *Conſtitution*, as " by an *armed Force*; it is a *Crime* productive of " a *total Deſtruction* of the very *Being* of this *Go-* " *vernment*, and is ſo *high* and *unnatural*, that no- " thing but the *Powers* of *Parliament* can reach it,

" and

" and as it can never meet with *Parliamentary An-*
" *imadverſion*, but when it is *unſucceſsful*, it muſt
" ſeek for it's *Security* in the *Extant* and *Efficacy*
" the *Miſchief* it *produces*; and therefore your
" Committee apprehend it is the *more neceſſary* for
" your *Conſideration*, while it's *wants* of *Succeſs*, yet
" leaves an *Opportunity* to *preſerve* and *maintain*
" your *Independency* for the *future*."

The *Oppoſition* are for proſecuting the *Hint* given in this Paſſage, that they may render it manifeſt, the *Efficacy* of *Corruption* has not yet reached *ſo far*, as to make Juſtice *ridiculous*, rather than *terrible*. If they carry their Point, it will be long before any *Man*, or any *Set* of *Men* will have Courage enough to tread in theſe *Paths* again; but if not, it will be no eaſy Matter to perſuade *the People* that ſuch as prevent *this*, mean to *walk* in *any other*. As to the *Councils* of the *Great* upon this *Head*, they remain a *perfect Secret*, and therefore as I would be very unwilling to *aſperſe* them, I ſhall not pretend to *gueſs* what they *really are*. Thus much I think the meaneſt Man in *Britain* may ſay, that to draw together ſuch a *Number* of *Facts* as are included in the *Piece*, I juſt now quoted, to *publiſh* them to the *World* with ſuch *ſtrong Obſervations*, and after all to lay them *aſide* again when they have ſerved no *viſible Purpoſe*, (but one that no *honeſt Man* can *ſuſpect* they were *meant* to *ſerve*) is what the *preſent Age* muſt *bluſh* to *ſee*, and what *Poſterity* will ſcarce be *brought* to *credit*.

Yet I am far from thinking this *Caſe* will *ever happen*, on the contrary, I am apt to believe the giving a *Check* to *Corruption* will be found moſt *neceſſary* by thoſe who alone are *able* to *encourage* or

protect it; for when I come to examine the *next Article*, I dare say it will appear that we are *too far gone* to bear with it any *longer*; that in short, the *Disease* will certainly *kill us*, if it be not quickly *cured*, and that therefore, such as have the *Care* of the *State*, must have *Recourse* to a *right Regimen*, if it *were not* as we ought to suppose it *is*, perfectly *agreeable* to their *Inclinations*.

I come now to the *last Point* I mentioned, which is the *draining* the *Wealth* of a Country, under Pretence of employing it for it's necessary *Services*. The Signs of this *Disease* have been already mention'd, and I doubt it will be thought a *Work* of *Supererrogation* for me to prove otherwise than by a *Repitition* of them, and an Appeal to the *Consciences* of my *Readers*, that in our political Capacity we are in the utmost Danger of *dying* of this *Distemper*. But as I abhor the Imputation of an *Incendiary*, and endeavour to explain Things that *are*, not to suggest such as *never existed*, so I am willing to go the deeper into this Matter, that Men of the meanest Understandings may know what it is their *Duty* to *bear*, and when they may with Reason *find Fault* with such *Impositions* as fall upon them for the *Support* of *Government*. In doing this, I shall be obliged to pay a stricter Regard to *Method* than I have hitherto done, and this for the Sake of convincing every impartial *Peruser*, that the *Opposition* have not been guided by *Prejudices*, or excited by *Peevishness* to complain on this Head, and to endeavour to give their Constituents *Light* into the *Causes* of their bearing such *heavy Burdens*, where it was out of their Power to give them *Ease*.

All

All *Governments*, as well as all *Families*, muſt have a certain *Rule* of *Expence*, beneath which, if they can be ſupported, they muſt grow *rich*, and above which, if they are raſh enough to *ſpend*, they muſt inevitably become *poor*. Debts and Diſtreſſes are as certain Marks of *want* of *OEconomy*, in one Caſe, as in the other; for it is as much the *Duty* of an *Adminiſtration* to live within Bounds, as of a *private Man*, and that this is done, concerns a *Nation* as much as does a *Houſhold*. But it may be ſaid, that it is not ſo eaſy for a People to diſcover when their *Rulers* raiſe, more than is requiſite, as for a *Family* to know when the Maſter of it *runs out*. But this I think, is ſaying more than can be proved, and I dare ſay, is very ſeldom ſaid; but as a *knaviſh Steward* excuſes his Maſter's *Extravagance*, becauſe the more he *throws away*, the more this knaviſh Servant *picks up*.

One Method of computing the *Circumſtances* of a *Nation*, is by conſidering the Proportion between the Hands that add to the *national Stock*, and the Hands that decreaſe it. About the Time of the *Revolution*, it was computed that the *latter* was to the *former* as 28 to 26, that is to ſay, ſuch as earned nothing themſelves, but lived upon what others earned, were conſiderably above one half of the Nation; now it is very eaſy to conceive, that if the Number of the *Induſtrious* hath been ſince leſſened, and the Number of the *Idle* increaſed, under Colour of *public Service*, then the *Income* of the Nation muſt be leſſen'd proportionably, and conſequently we muſt be leſs able to furniſh a large Revenue than we were at that Time. This I think is ſo plain, that no Man can doubt, or be at a loſs

about it; but if there ſhould be ſuch a Perſon, I would adviſe him to apply this to his own Family, and conſider whither, if half his Servants were *idle*, he could live at the ſame rate he does, while they *work*. But if we reflect on the great *ſtanding Army*, that we have long kept up, the prodigious Number of *Cuſtom-houſe* and *Exciſe-Officers*, that have been added ſince that Time, the Swarms of *Clerks* and other *Dependants*, on our Offices, where nothing is got, and on our *public Companies* that carry on no Trade, and the *long Liſt* of other *Employments* that have ariſen out of our *Luxuries*, *Debts* and *Taxes*, and add to theſe the prodigious Increaſe of our Poor, by the Ruin of our Manufactures, and the Decay of Trade, we ſhall eaſily apprehend that according to this *Rule*, the Computation is conſiderably againſt us, and that the *Scale* of the *Idle* preponderates, that of the *Induſtrious* by very far.

Another way of eſtimating the *Condition* of *Subjects* under any Government is to compare what they have paid within a *certain Compaſs* of *Time*, with what they have paid within a *like Compaſs* after that Period. This was a Method a late Writer took who call'd himſelf *the By-ſtander*, but a Method very unfit for his Purpoſe, and which it is certain he would never have mentioned, if he had well underſtood what he was about. But if that extraordinary Piece has done the World no other Good, it has at leaſt produced *an Anſwer* wherein theſe *Computations* are verified from *Records*, and in this Anſwer, we are told, that all the Money raiſed during the 24 Years Reign of King CHARLES II. *viz.* from 1661 to 1684, amount-

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ed to no more than 32,474,265 *l.* 4 *s.* 9 *d.* ½ whereas we raiſed in the Reign of King WILLIAM at leaſt 70 Millions, and in that of Queen ANNE, not leſs than 80, though both thoſe Reigns taken together, made not above 26 Years, and from that Time to this, we have raiſed upwards of a 100 Millions more. Now that the *Wealth* of the Nation has not increaſed in any Proportion to this *Expence*, nay, that it has not in fact increaſed at all, has been *made out* before; for though it be true, that many private *Men* have grown rich without Induſtry, yet that a Nation ſhould any other Way acquire *Wealth*, is repugnant to Common Senſe. This being the Caſe, it is impoſſible to doubt that increaſing our *Annual Expences* to three Times what they were, muſt impoveriſh the *Nation* exceſſively, or which is the ſame Thing, in other Words, muſt render the Situation of the *Subjects* in general, much worſe than it was before. And that this really is the *Caſe*, may be ſtill made more *evident* by a great Variety of Arguments, let us mention only a few.

We have been for above this *forty Years* conſtantly running in *Debt*; now it is certain, that a *Nation*, like a *private Man*, keeps *out* of Debt as long as it is poſſible. It has indeed been ſaid, that in *former Times* this was *not* our *Caſe*, but that in King WILLIAM's Time the Miniſtry run us *deeply* in *Debt*, when there was no Occaſion for it. Let us conſider *why* they did ſo? Why the People truly, who had lived under former Governments, and knew what it was to pay but *moderate Taxes*, were not in the Humour to *pay more*, and their Stubborneſs in this reſpect, threw the Load *off* themſelves

themſelves upon *Poſterity*. The former was *right*, tho' the *latter* was *wrong*. But taking the thing as it is repreſented to us, if the *Circumſtances* of the *Nation*, would then have born raiſing the *Supplies* for the *current Service* within the *Year*, and the *Miniſtry* did *not* raiſe them, then the *Miniſtry* were to *blame*; and this ſhews that the *People* had done *well*, if they had obliged them to have acted *otherwiſe*. But what is this to us, the *Neceſſity* of *running* in *Debt* now is viſible to every Body. Tho' they might have raiſed *three* or *four*; it is impoſſible that we with the *weight* of the *Debt* they left us, ſhould raiſe *ſeven* or *eight* Millions in a Year. Yet I am perſuaded, *Poſterity* will take it unkindly, if we ſhould for a *part*, a *ſmall part* of our *Expences* for this *preſent Year*, contract and leave upon them, a *Debt* for 32 Years to come. If ever there was an *Inſtance* of *bad OEconomy*, this of *running* in *Debt*, *continuing* in *Debt*, and never *thinking how* to *get out* of *Debt*, is one with a Vengeance; and if it makes no *Impreſſion*, why then——not only *we*——but our *Creditors* muſt have a bad Time of it.

Another Argument may be drawn from the *Nature* of our *Funds*, and the great *Advantages* that we have given to ſuch as place their *Money* there, over the *landed* and *trading Intereſt*. To give my Reader a juſt *Idea* of this, I muſt put him in mind of a *common Caſe*. A *young Gentleman* at firſt coming to his *Fortune* takes a liking to *Gaming*, *Drinking*, or *Whoring*, perhaps to all three. He firſt out-runs the *Income* of his *Eſtate*; well then, rather than *retrench*, or *curtail* his Pleaſures, What does he do, why, he *fells* his *Woods*, grants *Annu-*

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ities, diſcounts *Notes*, deals with *Uſurers*, gives large *Præmiums*, and pays *high Intereſt*, and that he may keep *touch* with theſe ſort of *People*; he *puts off* his honeſt *Tradeſmen*, and *racks* his *poor Tennants*. The very *View* of this *Caſe*, is ſufficient to convince any Perſon of *common Senſe*, that a Man who acts thus, is not either *prudent*, or *honeſt*; nay, it may ſerve to convince him of another thing too, that if he had been either, he wou'd have choſe to have thought how to get *rid* of his *Creditors*, rather than how to *oblige* them; for it is certain, that the *Civility* a Man ſhews when he is in *Debt*, does not proceed ſo much from *Senſe* of *Obligation*, as from the *fear* of *ſuffering*; and it is alſo clear, that no Man is ſo *cautious* of his *Credit*, as he who every Day ſtands in *need* of it: After making theſe *Remarks*, I need not dwell long on the *Application*.

When once it was reſolved to *run* the *Nation* in *Debt*, it became neceſſary to get *People* in the humour to *lend* their *Money*; and this gave Birth to moſt of the *Companies* in *Being*, as well as to *many* other Things. In virtue of this laudable *Invention* of *Stocks*, true *Induſtry*, and that *Commerce* which is *beneficial* to a *Nation*, have been thruſt *out* of *Doors*. Inſtead of an *Eſtate* in *Land*; inſtead of a *Shop* and *Warehouſe* in the *City*; inſtead of *Ships* at *Sea* and *Factories* abroad, a Man may turn 40, or 50,000 Pound in a *two pair* of *Stairs Room*; or if he has a mind like *Guy*, to make it a *couple* of *Plumbs* in a *Garret*. He has nothing to do but to ſlip now and then, from thence into the *Alley*, or to ſome *Places* adjoining, and there without the *Fatigue* of *Packing*, he may deal in very *weighty Commodities*, and raiſe to himſelf an *immenſe Fortune*, by

by puſhing his Money about, *this* way, and *that*; while he does his Country, or his Countrymen, not a *pennyworth* of *Service*, but muſt die with the diſſatisfaction of *knowing*; that is to ſay, if he thinks that he never got the *Bread* he *eat*. Thus *indefatigable Cunning* runs away with the Reward of *virtuous Induſtry*, and a *Nobleman's Wife*, whoſe Head is turn'd for this Sort of *Gaming*, ſhall acquire a *vaſt Eſtate*, in an Age which Bankrupts *one* Merchant out of *three*.

To *oblige* People of this *Caſt*, their Method of employing *Money*, has the Sanction of *public Faith*, for it's Exemption from all *public Duties*, and thus every Man pays the *Debts* of the *Nation* out of his *private Fortune*, except *thoſe* who have their *Fortunes* in *them*. The Gentleman groans under the *Load* of the *Land-Tax*. The Trader ſweats under numberleſs *Impoſitions*. And the Uſurer who contributes not *Six-pence* to the *public Stock* by his *Labour*, gives as *little* out of his *Gettings*. I do not ſay that this is *unneceſſary*, or as things ſtand at preſent, that it is *unjuſt*; but this I ſay, that it is *hard*, *very hard* upon thoſe who pay towards the Diſcharge of the *Intereſt*, upon which theſe People *live*, and pay it out of the *Fruits* of their honeſt Labour; and therefore we need never wonder, that when there is any *talk* of lowering Intereſt, or paying off public Debts, there is ſo great a *Clamour* raiſed againſt it, for it is plain, that if we *go on* in this Courſe, we ſoon come to ſuch a *Paſs*, as that the *Proprietors* of the public Debts ſhall be *too heavy* in point of Intereſt for all other Proprietors, and then modern Policy will be at the *higheſt Pitch* of Perfection, and all the induſtrious

duſtrious Part of the *Nation*, if they think fit to *ſtay in it*, will work as hard as they can work, ——— not for *themſelves* —— but for the *Idle*. And yet theſe *idle People* will, *ten* to *one*, continue to *believe* that they are the beſt Sort of Folks in the Nation.

That we may draw to a Concluſion in ſome Time, and not dwell too long on ſuch diſagreeable Subjects, I will mention but *one* Argument more, and that ſhall be the *ſeveral Methods* taken to ſupply the *Deficiency* of *real Wealth*, by *Tallies*, *Bonds*, *Notes*, and many other Contrivances. Theſe are underſtood to be great *Helps* to *Trade*, and ſo I confeſs they might be, if they were *circulated* only among *Traders*, for then we might be pretty certain, that the *real Value* of theſe *circulating Certificates* exiſted *ſomewhere*, which we know is *not* the Caſe at preſent, for if it were, the *Approach* of *War*, or the *Rumour* of an *Invaſion*, could not ſo *eaſily*, or ſo *deeply* affect them, as we know it *has done* and *would do*. On this Account, we may lay it down as a Thing certain, that as *Lotteries* give a *Check* to *Trade*, ſo the circulating of this kind of *Paper Treaſure* ſerves to *conceal* our Circumſtances, and to prevent our *Feeling* the gradual *Decay* of our *Wealth*, as well as to ſerve the *Purpoſes* of *ſly Politicians*, and to adminiſter to all the *Ends* of *Luxury*. In ſhort, there is not that Difference between *private* and *public* Affairs which ſome *crafty Writers* would make us believe; they are generally ſpeaking, govern'd by the *ſame Maxims*, and ought therefore to be judg'd by the *ſame Rules*: Frugality, Induſtry, and a virtuous Behaviour, is as *neceſſary* to make the State *flouriſh*, as to *better* the *Circum-*

ſtances of it's *meaneſt Subject* and Profuſion ; Idleneſs, and a total Corruption of Manners, will as certainly *beggar* a *Kingdom*, as it would *bankrupt* any *Man* in it.

There may be, in all probability, a Set of *carping Critics*, who will take *Exception* at this Manner of *ſtating Facts*, and pretend, that to *catch* the *Vulgar*, I write down to their *Taſte*, and by giving a *new Turn* to *political Subjects*, endeavour to render ſuch Things *ridiculous*, as ought to be the Objects of *Reverence*, and to make thoſe People *Judges*, who in the Nature of Things, can never be brought to apprehend the *Matters* of which I would have them judge. But to this I anſwer, that *familiar Compariſons* beſt explain *all Subjects*, and when uſed with Decency and Diſcretion, contribute more towards the ſpreading *true Science*, than all the *methodical Syſtems* that ever were publiſhed. I ſay farther, that I uſe them, becauſe I ſeek to be *underſtood*, and theſe ſolemn Gentlemen *diſclaim* them for the *contrary Reaſon*, becauſe they would keep their *real Sentiments* in the *Dark*, and delude the People with *Speeches* that ſeem to have a *contrary meaning*. They would perſwade them, that *Taxes* only *ſerve* to *circulate Money*, that the *Funds* are ſo many ſalutary *Contrivances* for the *Maintainance* of *Widows* and *Orphans*, without expoſing them to the Plague of *doing ſomething* to *get* their *Bread*, as was the *barbarous Cuſtom* of *former Ages* ; that *Lotteries* are thought of, purely to *ſurprize* good Subjects, with *great Eſtates*, without giving them the Trouble of *getting them* ; that *public Companies* are for the *Benefit* of *Trade*, or at leaſt of *Traders*, becauſe ſo many *Citizens* are provided for as *Directors*, and

that

that the *Liberty* ſuch *odd Fellows* as I, are allowed of talking againſt theſe *public Benefits*, is preferable to the *Freedom* our *Fore-fathers* enjoyed, when *Taxes*, *Debts* and *Lotteries* were Things *unheard* of, when a *Merchant* of *London* conteſted *Cuſtoms* with the *Crown*, and the Word *Exciſe*, if pronounced in *Parliament*, would have drawn a *Reprimand*, at leaſt if not a *Commitment*.

Another civiller *Sort* of *Criticks*, will furniſh out a new *Set* of *Objections*, ſuch as the Inexpediency of making theſe Things *known* to the *Vulgar*, the Danger of laying open to them the *Secrets* of *Government*, and the Folly of putting it into the Power of that *hot-mouth'd Beaſt* the *Multitude*, to take the *Bit* in its *Mouth*, and run away with its *Rider*. But theſe *ſoft ſpoken Gentlemen* ought to conſider that Exceptions of this Sort are a little out *out* of *Date*, for as Government *concerns* every Man, ſo it ſeems but natural that every Man ſhould *concern* himſelf about *Government*, and as the *loweſt Fellow* in the Kingdom contributes out of what he *gets* to the *public Service*, ſo it ſeems but *juſt* that he ſhould, if he has a Mind, know *what he pays for*, and *ſee*, if he *can ſee*, whether the *Public* is *well ſerved* or *not*. If the meaner Sort of People were *ſpared* in *public Impoſitions*, and only Men of a *certain Eſtate* paid towards the *Expences* of *Government*, there would be ſome *Colour* of *Juſtice* in talking of *Rabble* and *Mob*, and exclaiming againſt the *Inſolence* of the *Dregs* of the *People*. But while it is as it is, that every Man from the *Crown* of his *Hat* that covers his *Head*, to the *Sole* of the *Shoe* that he treads *under Foot*, wears nothing, *out* of which he does not *pay* towards the

Support of the *State*, and therefore cannot *eſcape paying*, unleſs he *goes naked*, and while it is impoſſible for a Man to *live*, though it were upon *brown Bread* and *Small-Beer*, without *contributing* to the Maintenance of *thoſe* who *rule* him. I ſhould be glad to know how conſiſtently with *Juſtice* and *Equity* any Creature that *breaths* the *Britiſh Air*, ſhould be deprived of his *Right* of enquiring and judging whether we are *well* or *ill* governed, while we call ourſelves a *free People*.

The *Miſchiefs* that are ſuppoſed to flow from theſe *Doctrines*, are meer *Bugbears* and *Chimera's*, a Sort of *Rawheads* and *Bloodybones*, invented by *political Nurſes* to fright their *Children* from *ſqualling*, when they are *too lazy* or *too proud* to undreſs and pull out the *Pins* that *prick* them. While a People may *enquire*, they will never *rebel*; but the ſureſt Way to make them *act*, is to forbid them to *talk*, as if you attempt to *tye* a Man's *Hands*, or to *gagg* him, he naturally ſuppoſes that you intend to *cut* his *Throat*, or at leaſt to make *free* with his *Pockets*. In ſuch a Country as this, the People need not recur to *Inſurrections*, thoſe are *fit Remedies* only under *arbitrary Governments*. We are *free* by our *Laws*, and therefore muſt have a *legal Remedy* for *every Evil*. The ſingle Enquiry then is under what *Evils* we *ſuffer*, what *Remedies* are moſt like to give us *Relief*, and *by whom* thoſe *Remedies* have been *propoſed*, ſince queſtionleſs *they are our Phyſicians*. On this Subject, therefore, I ſhall offer a few *free Thoughts* as they riſe in my Mind, and ſo leave my *Readers* to their own Reflections.

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It muſt be acknowledged on all Hands, that the *Oppoſition* have conſtantly and uniformly exclaimed againſt the Waſte of *public Treaſure*, the Squandering *People's Money*, increaſing the Number of their *Taxes*, and declining all Thoughts of decreaſing their *Debts*. It muſt be likewiſe own'd, that they have upon every Occaſion oppoſed ſuch Meaſures as have had a Tendency to theſe *Miſchiefs*; they have been againſt *indefinite Grants*, *Votes* of *Credit*, Sums given *without Account*, raiſing *unneceſſary Troops*, or raiſing *neceſſary Troops*, in *too expenſive* a Way, againſt *Negotiations* without End, and *Armaments* that *hurt none*, but *ourſelves*. They have earneſtly preſſed for *retrenching* our *annual Expences*, for a *Commiſſion* to review the *management* of the *Revenue* for ſeveral Years *paſt*, and another to *ſettle* and *ſtate* the *Debts* of the *Nation*. They have more than once propoſed, that *ſome Method* ſhould be taken to *ſtop theſe* at leaſt, till a way could be found to *pay* them, and they have always proteſted againſt applying any other Way the *ſinking Fund*, the only Method that ever was thought of for *paying it*. They have for twenty Years together expoſtulated with the *Friends* of the *Miniſtry*, whenever they have attempted to create *new Taxes*, or to continue *old ones* for *new Terms*; they have bewailed the Misfortune of the People to be continually feeling *freſh Weight*, without receiving any Addition either of Strength or Spirits. In a Word, they have manifeſted their Concert, and avowed their Diſlike of what they conceived would be fatal to their *Country*, and this they have done at the Expence of their *Characters* and *Fortunes*. In the former, they have ſuffered by the Imputati-

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on of being *diſaffected*; the latter has been impaired not only by their conſtant ſerving the Nation at their own *Expence*, but by their being obliged to *ſpend* their *own Money* againſt that of the *Nation*, in order to have the *Honour* to ſerve it at their *own Expence*, and to be able to propoſe their Doubts, to lay open their Jealouſies, and to expoſe to the People's Repreſentatives whatever they took to be *Grievances* on the *People*.

As to any *Propoſitions*, made by the *Great*, either for leſſning our Charge, for lowering our Impoſitions, or for putting our Debts into a Train of Payment, I muſt ſay it frankly, I know of *none*. They frequently ſpeak indeed in very pathetic Terms of ſupporting the Honour and Dignity of the Crown, of furniſhing *Supplies* for the *public Service*, and of making good the *Deficiencies* of *former Grants*. They commonly diſplay their *Eloquence*, in ſupport of *Laws* for ſecuring and increaſing the *Revenue*, for appointing and aſcertaining *new Funds*, and as in the Caſe of the *Gin-Act*, for preventing the Crown's *Loſs* by the People's *Gain*, though in the Event, the Terms were reverſed, for the People *got nothing*, and the Crown *all*. No doubt if theſe worthy Perſons would apply themſelves as aſſiduouſly to the *Points* which the Patriots pretend to make their *Care*, they might ſucceed as happily in them, as they do in their *Expedients* for raiſing thoſe *vaſt Sums*, which they find *annually* requiſite for the Service of a Nation, which it is to be feared, may ſometime or other be unable to reward ſuch able Servants, at leaſt as amply as ſhe has hitherto done. Dr. *Davenant* foreſaw this above *forty* Years ago, and told

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us very *prophetically* in a Book he publiſhed about that Time, that as we could never hope to thrive or grow rich as a *Nation*, while the *Expences* of our *Government* exceeded *two Millions three Hundred Pounds* per Annum, ſo if we went on in the Train we were then, of giving a *Looſe* to our *Expences*, and contracting *Debts* without *Bowels* for *Poſterity*, we might at length come to raiſe *ſix* or *ſeven* Millions a Year as *long* as it would *laſt*. As we have fulfilled the *latter Part* of this *Prediction*, ſo methinks it is high Time we took the *firſt* into our *Conſideration*, for without Queſtion, the *Time* is not *far off*, when even the moſt *conſummate Politicians* will find it ſurpaſs their Skill to draw *Water* out of an *empty Well*.

We have now run through the *Riſe*, *Progreſs* and ſeveral *Fates* of the *Oppoſition*; we have ſeen it *feeble* in its *Beginning*, and deſpiſed for its *Feebleneſs*; we have ſeen it continually *growing*, notwithſtanding all the Pains taken to *depreſs* it. We have known it *thrive* upon *Defeats*, and we now ſee it in a *worſe Condition* for it's *Victory*. From this Proſpect of the *Events* which have attended it, we have learned to diſtinguiſh between the *Pretences* of ſome who are, or have been *engaged* in it, and the *Principles* of the *Oppoſition* itſelf. The former we have diſcovered to be ſometimes *iniquitous*, and always *irregular*, the latter perfectly *juſt*, and everlaſtingly *the ſame*. This has explained to us the Folly of conceiving amiſs of *Oppoſition* through the *Conduct* of ſuch as have been at the *Head of it*, and this has taught, or ought to teach us, that an *Oppoſition* never ſuffers by the

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Loſs of ſuch *Heads*. A *Faction* cannot be without *Leaders*, becauſe the Deſign of a Faction, is to bring thoſe who compoſe it, into *Power*, and there is no managing a *War* without a *Commander* in *Chief*, and ſubordinate *Officers*. But an *Oppoſition* it quite *another Thing*, it aims at a *Change of Meaſures*, and not of *Men*, and therefore is never in a greater Probability of *ſucceeding*, than when ſuch as compoſe it, are bound to each other by no other *Tie* than that of *ſameneſs* of *Sentiment*, and propound nothing more to *themſelves* than obliging *others* to act *right*.

We have ſtill done more than all this, we have examined the *Grounds* and *Reaſons* of *the Oppoſition*. We have conſidered the Nature of thoſe Things of which they *complain*, independent of their Relation to ourſelves, and we have ſeen that they are real and not imaginary Evils; that they are productive of ruinous *Conſequences*, and that as all this is diſcoverable by *Common Senſe*, ſo it has been juſtified likewiſe by *conſtant Experience*. We have then enquired into the *Evidence* in Proof of theſe *Miſchiefs* actually ſubſiſting *amongſt us*, and after theſe neceſſary *Steps*, we have taken a View of the *Remedies* propoſed, and of the *Arguments* offered to ſhew that they would *radically* cure theſe *Miſchiefs*. Thus we have gone through the whole of what we *propoſed*, and if we have committed any Error in the *Courſe* of our *Reaſonings*, upon ſo many and ſo intricate *Subjects*, the whole lies ſtill before *us*, and we may eaſily trace that Error back to its Source, and conſequently have it in our Power to *rectify* our *Notions*. All this we have done without

out *Heat* or *Paſſion*, without *Prejudice* or *perſonal Reſentment*, we have purſued *Truth* and not *Opinion*, we have proſecuted *national Advantages*, and not ſought to recommend the *Deſigns* of *any Party*; we have united the *free-thinking* of the *Whigs*, with the *Public Spirit* of the *Tories*, and we have ſhewn that a *rational Oppoſition* comprehends all that is *good*, and rejects all that is *evil* in every *Party*.

Upon the whole, we have made it manifeſt that *the Oppoſition*, ſtrictly ſpeaking, hath nothing in it of *Diſaffection* or *Diſloyalty*, but has a direct Tendency to encreaſe the *Power* of the *Crown*, by procuring the *Good* of the *Subject*. We have made it clear, that the mixing theſe *noble Views* with *perſonal Reſentments*, is the only means by which they can be *defeated*, and this has enabled us to *explain* what to ſo many has ſeemed *inexplicable*, the ſhort turn made by *thoſe* who in the midſt of their *Profeſſions* of their intending only the *former*, were in their *Hearts* reſolved to proceed no farther than the *latter*. By doing this, we have done our utmoſt to eſtabliſh *the Oppoſition* for the future on its *proper Baſis*, to point out the *Advantages* it may procure to the *Nation*, and the Neceſſity there is of *procuring them* ſome way or other, if we mean *well* to the *Nation*, and therefore we preſume, that we have effectually executed what our *Title* promiſed, and that within the narrow Compaſs of this *Diſcourſe*, the candid Reader will find the *Caſe of the Oppoſition impartially ſtated*.

F I N I S.